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ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE.

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PROSPECTUS :  
CONSTITUTION :  
BY-LAWS.

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1824.

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ROYAL SOCIETY

OF

Literature.



# ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE,

INSTITUTED UNDER THE PATRONAGE, AND ENDOWED BY THE MUNIFICENCE

OF

HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE, THE IVth.

FOR THE

*PROMOTION OF GENERAL LITERATURE.*

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AMONG the various Attainments, of which the Human Mind is capable, none is calculated to confer more solid Advantages, or more permanent Celebrity, either on Individuals or Nations, than Pre-eminence in Literature. Literary Genius and Taste seem to be considered by the more cultivated Portions of Mankind as Qualities of a higher Order than even Military Skill or Civil Wisdom. The Glory of the Warrior or Statesman fades before that of the Poet, the Orator, or the Historian. When we turn our eyes on Ancient Greece, fertile above all other Countries in Talent of every description, how dim does the fame of Lycurgus, or even of Alexander appear, when contrasted with that of Homer; and while we acknowledge the superiority of the Military Institutions of Sparta, and the Civil Polity of Corinth, with what delight do we turn from them to contemplate the splendor of Athens, by whose unrivalled excellence in the higher Productions of Reason and Imagination, all successive Generations have been charmed and enlightened. Imperial Rome, famed as she is for her Conquests and her Laws, has attained a higher and more splendid fame from her successful imitation of the Greek Models of Literature; and even Modern Italy, defective as she has ever been in the Arts of War and Government, has in a great degree compensated those defects by the revival of Arts and Letters, and the perfection she has attained in them; a merit which has illustrated her in her Fall, and justly entitles her to be esteemed the Mother of modern Civilization and Genius.

Nor is the judgment erroneous, that estimates so highly the value of Literary Merit. No other cause has so powerful an effect on the Character of Nations; on their Manners, their Morals, and even their Religion. Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, however excellent and useful in other respects, can have little influence on these; Literature, on

the contrary, is the necessary instrument of Moral and Intellectual Improvement, in a great and numerous People. In Families and small Communities Instruction may be conveyed, though slowly and laboriously, by other means: in a vast Empire, like this, its Population and Extent render all efforts insufficient, but through the medium of the Press. That Instrument is indeed of a vast and tremendous Power, either for good or evil. Its Productions are in our days circulated into the remotest quarters of the Kingdom, with an industry unknown to former ages, and seem to be received with avidity wherever they are circulated. Thus universally diffused, General Literature must finally mould the Morals of the People. It is the very Life-Blood of the Body Politic, and in proportion as it is salubrious or tainted, the Nation must become polite or barbarous, moral or vicious, pious or impious.

The Renown which the British Nation has achieved during the late Wars, by the vigor and success of her Arms and Counsels, and the decisive Lead she took in the great Struggle for the Restoration of European Independence, has irresistibly attracted the attention of the Continent to her National Character and Institutions; her Language is universally diffused, and her Literature is studied by the Learned among all the states of Christendom. In our System of Social Order, they will find much to admire and to imitate; in our Reformed Religion, as pure Ordinances of Worship as are perhaps compatible with the imperfection of our Nature; in the munificent Endowments of our Public Schools and Universities, an ample Provision for instructing our Youth in every Branch of Liberal and Scientific Learning; for the Encouragement and Improvement both of the Fine Arts, and those which are applicable to Manufactures and Commerce, a National Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, and a Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce; above all they will find in our Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge, an Institution that has by the distinguished Genius of its Members, and the rapid succession of its brilliant and useful Discoveries in Science for the last Century and a Half, reflected a glory on the Nation, never eclipsed or perhaps equalled by the Labours of any other Scientific Association. Amongst all these noble and useful Institutions, must it not strike them with astonishment, that there has never existed in the British Metropolis, a Society for the Encouragement and Improvement of General Learning and Polite Literature?

Can it be asserted by any liberally educated man, that such a Society would be useless? can it be believed that the finest Productions of the Human Intellect are alone incapable of being improved and perfected by culture? Such indisputably has not been the opinion of the Wise and Learned of other Nations. Early after the Revival of Learning, numerous Societies were established throughout Italy, which laboured successfully in purifying the melodious Language of that Country, and in diffusing that refined Taste for which the Italians have been long celebrated. In emulation of these, Cardinal Richelieu founded the French Academy, which has extended its researches over all the Regions of Knowledge, has embraced the Interests both of Literature and Science, has improved the Language and Taste of the French Nation, and has acquired, and still maintains a



Celebrity superior to that of any similar Establishment in the World. In later times the Fame and Utility of those Academies have given birth to a great variety of similar Societies, not only in the different Nations of Europe, but in the United States of America, and the British Settlements in the East Indies; all which, as we are informed, have had the most decisive and evident influence on the Progress of Human Reason and Knowledge, in the several Countries of which they are the Ornaments.

The substantial Benefits derived from Societies of this Nature to those Sciences, which are conversant with the Material World, *viz.* the various Branches of Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Medicine, Agriculture, and the Mechanical Arts, are incontrovertible, and universally admitted. What good or plausible reason can be assigned why similar advantages may not accrue from similar Societies in those Sciences, which are conversant with the Intellectual World, *viz.* Grammar, Rhetoric, Criticism, Poetry, History, Morals, and Polity? Are our Knowledge and Taste on these Subjects incapable of Augmentation or Improvement? or, is there not good reason to believe that both might be essentially benefited by an Investigation of their Laws and Principles with the same caution and the same spirit that have guided our Physical Inquiries?

To enumerate the existing Deficiencies in the various Classes of Literature and Polite Learning, and the Improvements they are capable of, would be a long and arduous task. In a general view it may be remarked, that in *Languages* we know little of their Origin and Formation, and still less of the mutual influence which Thought and Language have on each other. The primary Laws and Elements of Good Writing require to be more exactly defined and firmly established; and with respect to our Native Tongue, much Cultivation is wanted to rectify what has been depraved, to resist capricious innovation, to proscribe its absurdities, and preserve its purity. In *History* the migrations of mankind are far from being satisfactorily traced; the Monumental Remains which have of late been progressively brought to light, by the intrepid and patient researches of modern Travellers, have afforded ample Materials for illustrating the Mythology, Manners, and Genius of the most Ancient Nations. In the Progress of Discovery, we may hope to put Ancient Chronology, which is at present in a worse state than that of Natural Philosophy before the times of Bacon and Newton, upon a more solid and permanent Foundation, and to improve our knowledge of Geography, by defining more clearly the boundaries of Kingdoms and Provinces in past ages, by ascertaining the sites of Cities and Temples, and tracing the ancient Courses of Rivers. In the *Science of the Mind*, our Knowledge of the Laws, the Limits, and the Resources of the Human Understanding, is yet imperfect. In *Moral Philosophy* our Investigations may still be beneficially directed, in tracing with analytical accuracy, the Phænomena of Human Nature to their first Principles in the Constitution and Condition of Man. In *Political Philosophy*, incalculable Improvements may be made by wide Surveys of the various Conditions of Human Society. In this Science the Principles of Population; the natural course of Rent, Profit, and Wages; the influence of the Reformatations and Revolutions, of the Inventions and Commerce of Modern Times, are fertile Fields of Discovery and

Knowledge; and an attempt to reduce into Scientific Arrangement the Histories of different Governments, and by contemplating their general Classes, to investigate the Laws of their Action, is well worthy of the united efforts of sagacious and intelligent Minds.

When the French Academy was projected, its Primary Objects were to purify and fix their Native Language, and settle the Standard of true Taste. A fixed Perfection in either of these is perhaps quite incompatible with the imperfections of the Human Mind; nevertheless, an approximation to such Perfection, as far as our Nature is capable, is well worthy the united efforts of the Learned. In all highly civilized Societies there seems a strong tendency to Corruption both of Taste and Language, which soon leads to total degeneracy unless great efforts are made to counteract it. Perhaps in the present state of Literature in this Country, where the Public are insatiable in their demands for new Publications, where the Mercantile Press is incessantly at work to pour out innumerable Productions suited to the general Appetite, and where Mercantile Criticism pursues those Works at regular monthly or weekly periods, there is little that is calculated to stem the Tide of Corruption. Great works are the Produce only of much Time and Labour, which must also be applied to a due appreciation of their Merits and Imperfections. Where Profit is the prevailing motive, and Rapidity of Composition its means, the Writings of the most ingenious men must necessarily be constructed of perishable materials, and the People, accustomed only to such insubstantial food, will reject what is more solid and nourishing. It would indeed be a vain hope in any Society to fix the Taste or the Language of their Country; yet it is not perhaps an unreasonable expectation that a great Literary Society, seated in this Metropolis, open to all the Learned and Ingenious Men of the Empire, discarding all views of Profit, and not refusing any Labor for the Amelioration of English Literature, may have a strong tendency to retard the Torrent on which the Public Mind is borne, to resist capricious Innovation, to detect bad Taste before it becomes inveterate, and to recal the Public Attention to the modes of writing and thinking in the most shining Periods of our Literature.

Neither is it to the Objects already enumerated that the views and Hopes of such a Society may be exclusively confined. In the various Literary Repositories of this and other Countries, innumerable Manuscripts lie hid, which can only be made useful by being examined and brought to light. It has been a prevailing and laudable Ambition for some ages, not only among learned, but among great and opulent Men throughout Europe, to collect these Treasures, but no Progress proportional to their importance has yet been made in examining, interpreting, and comparing them, and in applying them to their proper uses. In the Bodleian Library alone, employment might be furnished for more than one generation of Students, before its accumulations could be even rightly appreciated. To the British Museum a similar observation may be applied; and when we reflect on the innumerable Public and Private Collections of a similar Nature subsisting in this Kingdom, we cannot reasonably doubt, that if due encouragement were given to the working of these Mines of Knowledge, the Product of them would incalculably enrich every Branch of Polite and Useful Learning.



It was at the close of the year 1820 announced to the Public, that the Outline of an Institution in this Metropolis for the Promotion of General Literature, had been submitted to the consideration of the King, by His Majesty's command,—that His Majesty had been pleased to express in the most favourable terms His Royal Approbation of the Plan proposed,—that He had honoured the projected Society with the sanction of His exalted Patronage, and extended to it His Royal Munificence. On this Foundation it was proposed to establish an Institution under the Title of “the Royal Society of Literature for the Advancement of General Literature,” in its widest range and extent.

The Society are quite aware that the great Objects of their Institution cannot be attained without adequate exertions on their part to establish their character, and to win the esteem and regard of the Public, without yielding to its Prejudices: unless such exertions are made it must necessarily sink from its own imbecility. Neither did the Society hope to escape the attacks of Prejudice, Envy, and Self-Interest, by which all similar Institutions have in their infancy been assailed, but their Trust is, that by steadily pursuing their course, they will soon leave such enemies behind them.

One plausible objection has been raised to the establishment of an Institution of this description in the British Capital, which the Society think it incumbent on them to notice. It is objected, that as the frame of our Polity is such, as to give rise to incessant Controversies on Political and Religious Topics, a Literary Society under the immediate Patronage of the Crown, may be made an Instrument of Attack or Defence of particular Sects or Parties, according to the Passions or Interests of its individual Members. The Society are sensible that such a suspicion only, would be fatal to all the objects they have in view, and they trust that such sense is a sufficient guarantee to the Public, that they will omit no means in their power to preclude the possibility of it. Their hope is that every Member of their Society will be actuated by pure Principles of Religion and Virtue, and warmly attached to the Religious and Political Institutions of his Country; but the British Constitution has prescribed and furnished adequate means for her own defence, and the Royal Society of Literature, fully convinced that to make their Council Room an Arena for such Controversies, would be detrimental to the country, and ruinous to themselves, have made it one of their Fundamental Regulations to exclude all Writings from their notice, that may relate to any temporary controversial Topics.

The great Object of the Society is to render the pursuit of Literature honourable in itself and beneficial in its results to Society, by encouraging a strictly Classical Taste, an impartial and just System of Criticism, pure Morality, and sound Learning; and, to accomplish this desirable Purpose, it is intended to have regular Meetings, where Men of Literature may enjoy the opportunity of mutual intercourse, and may, by combination of effort, and union of mind, promote the advancement of those branches of General Knowledge, which the Society professes more especially to encourage and cultivate.

At the stated Meetings of the Society, such Literary Communications as the Members or other learned Persons may be disposed to make, will be gratefully received, and, if they correspond with the views of the Institution, will be publicly read. And as all Information of an original kind, drawn from authentic sources, is valuable, Transcripts of inedited Greek, Latin, Saxon, and ancient English Manuscripts, conjectural Emendations of eminent Scholars, interesting Selections from the unpublished Journals of intelligent Travellers, Analytical Accounts of valuable Manuscripts, treasured up in public or private Libraries, will be considered as desirable Additions to the mass of Knowledge, which the Society is anxious to accumulate. From such Contributions Selections will occasionally be made for Publication; such Selections will constitute the Transactions of the Society, and as they will go forth to the Public under the sanction of Judges competent to pronounce on their merits, the Transactions of the Society will be the Depositary of a Collection of valuable Materials, which will afford important aid in the construction of future Histories, and will preserve Facts that may be effectual for the Establishment of new scientific Systems on more solid and permanent Bases.

Such are the Principles, and such the Objects of the Royal Society of Literature, which they have considered it their Duty at the present season to lay before the Public. Of the soundness of these Principles, and utility of these Objects, they are confident; and they call for the Assistance of all their Fellow-Countrymen, who feel a zeal for the Interests of Literature, and for those Principles of sound Reasoning and pure Taste, which are inseparably connected with them.

COUNCIL ROOM,  
16th May, 1822.

Carlton Palace

2<sup>nd</sup> June 1823.

Y<sup>rs</sup> B<sup>ly</sup>

My Lord

I am honored with the Commands  
of The King, to acquaint Your Lordship,  
that His Majesty most entirely approves  
of The Constitution and Regulations of  
The Royal Society of Literature, as  
submitted by Your Lordship.

The Bishop of St. David's

I have the honor to be

My Lord

With great respect and esteem

your Lordships

most faithful and sincere

Servant

W. Knighton.



## Royal Society of Literature,

INSTITUTED UNDER THE PATRONAGE, AND ENDOWED BY  
THE MUNIFICENCE,

OF

HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE THE FOURTH,

FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF LITERATURE:

By the Publication of **INEDITED REMAINS** of **ANCIENT LITERATURE**, and of such Works, as may be of great intrinsic value, but not of that popular character which usually claims the attention of Publishers:—By the promotion of **DISCOVERIES** in **LITERATURE**:—By endeavours to fix the **STANDARD**, as far as is practicable, and to preserve the **PURITY**, of our **LANGUAGE**, by the critical Improvement of our **Lexicography**:—By the **READING**, at Public Meetings, of interesting Papers on **HISTORY**, **PHILOSOPHY**, **POETRY**, **PHILOLOGY**, and the **ARTS**; and the Publication of such of those Papers, as shall be approved of, in the Society's Transactions:—By the assigning of **HONORARY REWARDS** to Works of great Literary Merit, and to important Discoveries in Literature:—And by establishing a Correspondence with Learned Men in **FOREIGN COUNTRIES**, for the Purpose of Literary Inquiry and Information.

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# Constitution and Regulations

OF

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE.

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## OBJECT.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE is instituted for the advancement of General Literature.

## MEANS.

THE SOCIETY PROPOSES—

*First*,—To promote, by assistance from its funds, or otherwise, the publication, and, in some cases, the translation, of valuable Manuscripts, discovered in any public or private Collection.

*Secondly*,—To encourage such discoveries by all suitable means.

*Thirdly*,—To promote the publication of Works of great intrinsic value, but not of so popular a character as to induce the risk of individual expense.

*Fourthly*,—To read, at its public Meetings, such papers upon subjects of General Literature, as shall have been first approved by the Council of the Society; from which papers a selection shall be made, to be printed in the Transactions of the Society.

*Fifthly*,—To adjudge Honorary Rewards, to persons who shall have rendered any eminent service to Literature, or produced any work highly distinguished for Learning or Genius; provided always, that such work contain nothing hostile to Religion or Morality.

*Sixthly*,—To establish Correspondence with Learned Men in Foreign Countries, for the purpose of Literary inquiry and information.

*Seventhly*,—To elect, as Honorary Associates, persons eminent for the pursuit of Literature; and from these to elect Associates upon the Royal Foundation, and upon the foundation of the Society, as circumstances may admit.

## CONSTITUTION.

The Society shall consist of Fellows and Associates.

The Officers of the Society shall be chosen from the Fellows, and shall consist of a President, eight Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Librarian, and two Secretaries; who, with sixteen other Fellows of the Society, shall constitute a Council.



## ELECTION AND ADMISSION OF FELLOWS.

All the present Benefactors and Subscribers are Members of the Society. The Election of Fellows, in future, shall be according to the following rules :—

Every Candidate, in order to be elected a Fellow, must be proposed and recommended by three Fellows, at least, of the Society; who shall deliver to one of the Secretaries a paper signed by themselves, according to Form I.

The paper or certificate, thus attested, shall be read at an ordinary Meeting, and then suspended in the usual place of meeting of the Society, till the day of Election.

The Election shall take place in the manner following:—

The names of the Candidates, duly proposed, shall be suspended in the usual Meeting Room of the Society, during three ordinary Meetings, at least; after which, at the next ordinary Meeting at which five Fellows shall be present, the Election shall take place by Ballot; and such Candidates as shall have full two-thirds of the votes of the Fellows present, shall be declared duly elected.

Upon the admission of every Fellow, provided that he has duly made his first payment, and subscribed to the Form required, (vide Form II.) the President or Vice-President, shall take him by the hand and say :—A.B. I do, by the authority, and in the name, of the Royal Society of Literature, admit you a Fellow thereof.

The Subscription of every Fellow shall be Two Guineas annually, at the least, to be paid in advance; or, in lieu of Annual Payments, a Composition at the rate of ten years' purchase, for that, or any higher subscription.

The Annual Subscriptions become due on the 1st of January.

Whenever any Fellow shall be more than two years in arrear of payment, his name shall be delivered in, by the Treasurer, to the Council; who shall direct one of the Secretaries to address him, by Letter, upon the subject; and if he shall, for the space of six months, after the sending of such Letter, continue in arrear, the President, with the advice of the Council, shall make a declaration, that he is no longer a Fellow of the Society, and he shall cease to be a Fellow from that time.

#### ASSOCIATES.

HIS MAJESTY having, on the 2nd of November, 1820, been pleased to express, in the most favourable terms, His Royal Approbation of the plan of this Society, and having Honoured it with his Munificent Patronage, by assigning to ten Associates the Annual Sum of One Hundred Guineas each, payable out of the Privy Purse.

And also the Annual Sum of One Hundred Guineas as a premium for the best Dissertation on some important subject of Literature, since exchanged, with His Majesty's consent, for Two Medals, as Honorary Rewards, to be adjudged to Literary Works of eminent merit, and to important discoveries in Literature.

And THE SOCIETY being desirous of seconding His Majesty's Bounty, by the appointment of an equal number of Associates on the Funds of the Society:—

The Associates shall consist of two classes; the first class, composed of *Royal Associates*, and *Associates of the*

*Society*; the second, of **HONORARY ASSOCIATES**, from whom the Associates of the first class shall be elected.

Associates of the first class shall be persons of distinguished learning, and Authors of some creditable work of Literature; ten on the Royal Endowment, and the same number on the Funds of the Society. The whole number, both of the Royal Associates and Associates of the Society, shall be appointed by the Council of the Society. The appointment of the Society's Associates shall take place at such time, and in such degree, as to the Council shall seem expedient.

No person shall be eligible as an Associate, unless recommended by at least three Members of the Council.

Every Associate of the first class shall, on his admission, choose some branch of Literature, and it shall be his duty, to communicate to the Council, once a year at least, a Disquisition or Essay, on some point relative to that branch of Literature so chosen by him.

### COUNCIL.

In the Council is vested the direction and management of the Funds of the Society; the adjudication of the Honorary Rewards; the nomination of Associates, of Honorary Members, and Honorary Associates; the selection of Papers, to be read at the Meetings, or published in the Memoirs of the Society; the appointment of subordinate Officers and Servants, with such Salaries as shall to them seem reasonable, subject to the approbation of the next Annual Meeting of the Society; and the administration of all the affairs of the Society: all their proceedings being subject to such By-Laws, as

the General Annual Meeting may find it expedient to establish.

The Council shall meet at the House of the Society, at least once in each month, during the Session; an extra Meeting shall be called, upon the requisition of any three Members of Council, by a Letter addressed to one of the Secretaries.

At any Meeting of the Council, five Members shall constitute a Quorum.

Upon the summoning of a Council, due notice of each Meeting shall be sent by one of the Secretaries to each Member.

All questions in Council shall be determined by the majority of Votes. If the number of Votes be equal, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

No Laws or Regulations made by the Council shall be considered permanently binding upon the Society, until they shall have been communicated to, and have received the approbation of, the Fellows, at a General Meeting.

#### ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL.

The President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Librarian, and Secretaries, and the other Members of Council, shall be elected annually by ballot, at the General Annual Meeting, on the last Thursday in April.

Eight only of the aforesaid Members of Council, shall be re-eligible for the ensuing year.

No person shall be elected a Member of Council, whose residence is not, during some part of the time appointed



for the Session of the Society, within the limits of the three-penny post.

At the two ordinary Meetings of the Society next preceding the day of the Anniversary, the President shall give notice of the day and time, when the said Elections are to be made.

Every Fellow of the Society, in or near London, shall be called to the said Anniversary Meeting, by a particular summons, signed by the President, or one of the Secretaries in his name, if the President shall so direct; which summons shall be delivered to every such Fellow, or sent by the post to his address, a week, at least, before the said day.

In these Elections, the persons who shall have the greatest number of Votes shall be declared duly elected: and if any doubt or difficulty shall happen in relation thereto, or to the particular manner of voting, the same shall, *pro hac vice*, be determined by the majority of the President and Council for the preceeding Year, then present.

Upon any vacaney of the President's place, in the intervals of the Anniversary Elections, the senior Vice-President in nomination shall officiate as the President, till the next General Annual Meeting of the Society.

All vacaneies among the Officers of the Society, during the same period, shall be provisionally supplied by the Council.

#### PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS.

The President, or, in his absence, the senior Vice-President, or, if neither the President, nor any Vice-President be present, the senior in Council, shall preside in all the

Meetings of the Society, or of the Council, and regulate the proceedings of the same; put questions; check irregularities; and execute, or provide for the execution of all the Laws of the Society.

In all Elections where the numbers of Votes are equal, the President, or Chairman for the time being, shall have the casting Vote.

#### TREASURER.

The Treasurer shall receive on account, and for the use of the Society, all sums of money due to the Society, and out of those Funds pay all sums due by the Society, according to such Regulations and By-Laws as may be hereafter made. And, in the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, shall be Chairman of the Council, and General Meeting of the Society.

#### LIBRARIAN.

The Librarian shall have the superintendence and management of all the printed Books, Manuscripts, Maps, Prints, Drawings, or Papers, of whatsoever kind, presented to, or purchased by, the Society; and he shall see that the same be carefully preserved, and that proper catalogues of them, for the use of the Fellows, be duly made and kept.

#### SECRETARIES.

It shall be the duty of the Secretaries, to attend all the Meetings of the Society and the Council; and when the Chair shall have been taken, one of them shall read

the Minutes of the preceding Meeting, and afterwards minute down the Business and Orders of the present Meeting.—The other shall read all Letters or Papers, deemed proper by the Council to be communicated to the Society, and shall have the custody of the same, to be produced when required.

One of the Secretaries shall issue all Notices of Meetings; prepare Lists of Fellows in arrear of payment, and report the same annually to the Treasurer; and shall address all Fellows in arrear, as the Council may direct.

One or both of the Secretaries, as the Council may appoint, shall prepare an Annual Report of the state of the Society, and superintend, through the press, all the Papers or Volumes of Memoirs, printed by order of the Society.

#### ORDINARY MEETINGS.

The ordinary Meetings of the Society shall be held on Wednesday Evenings, at an hour to be hereafter fixed, in the first and third week of every calendar month, (except during the weeks of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide,) from the month of November to June, both inclusive.

The Chairman shall announce the Names of strangers, wishing to be present; the Minutes of the last Meeting shall be read; Presents acknowledged; new Fellows proposed, and those whose names have been suspended the appointed time, ballotted for; Communications read; and any other Business authorized by the Council shall be proceeded upon.

Each Fellow shall be allowed to introduce a Stranger, provided that he write his name in the List, to be read from the Chair by the President or Chairman for the time being.

#### GENERAL MEETINGS.

The Anniversary Meeting of the Society shall be on the last Thursday in April, when the Report of the Council on the state of the Society shall be read; the Medals announced, or delivered by the President as previously adjudged; the Officers and other Members of Council for the ensuing Year, elected; and any other Business recommended by the Council shall be discussed.

The President and Council may call at any time an Extraordinary General Meeting, the same Notice being given, as directed for the General Annual Meeting. At the General Meetings of the Society no Stranger shall be admitted.

#### DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS.

Every Person who shall contribute, by Donation or Legacy, Sums of Money, or Presents of Books, &c. in furtherance of the objects of the Society, shall be recorded as a Benefactor; his name and benefaction shall be announced at an ordinary Meeting of the Society, and shall be inserted in the next succeeding Volume of the Society's Memoirs.

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## FORM I.

A. B. [*Here state the Christian Name, Surname, Rank, Profession, and usual Place of Residence of the Candidate,*] being desirous of admission into the Royal Society of Literature, we, the undersigned, propose and recommend him, as a proper Person to become a Fellow thereof.

Witness our hands, this      day of

} From personal  
} knowledge.

## FORM II.

I, the undersigned, being elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, do hereby promise that I will be governed by the Regulations of the said Society, as they are now formed, or as they may be hereafter altered, amended, or enlarged; that I will endeavour to advance the objects of the said Society.

Provided that whenever I shall signify in writing to the Society, in the manner prescribed by them, that I am desirous of withdrawing my name therefrom, I shall (after the payment of any Annual Contribution which may be due by me at that period,) be free from this obligation.

Witness my hand, this      day of



# BY - LAWS

OF

## The Royal Society of Literature.

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### ELECTION AND ADMISSION OF FELLOWS.

1.—Members of the Royal Family, upon signifying their wish to become Fellows of this Society, shall be admitted, without Ballot, by their entering their names in the Book of Signatures.

2.—Every one of His Majesty's Subjects who is a Peer of the Realm, or a Privy Counsellor, may be proposed to be a Fellow of this Society, by any single Fellow, and his Election put to the vote on the same day—there being present five Members at the least.

3.—All Persons proposed to be, and elected, Fellows of this Society after May 6th, 1824, shall pay upon their Admission, a fee of three Guineas.

4.—Upon the proposal of, or ballot for any person, as Candidate to be either Fellow, Honorary Member, or Associate of either class, no public discussion shall be allowed.

5.—Due notice of all Elections shall be sent immediately to such persons as have been elected Honorary Associates, Associates, Honorary Members, or Fellows.

6.—When a newly-elected Member, on account of his residing at a distance from the Metropolis, or from any other sufficient cause, may not be able to attend in person to be admitted according to the present Regulations of the Society, he shall, upon stating in writing to the Secretary, the cause of such absence, and having, further, paid his Annual Subscription, or a Composition in lieu of the same, and having, also, subscribed to the form required [No. 2]\* (of which a printed copy shall in this case be transmitted to him) be forthwith admitted a Fellow of the Society: and a notice to the above effect shall be given with the announcement of his Election.

#### ASSOCIATES OF THE FIRST CLASS.

1.—Any Member of the Council wishing to propose an Associate of the First Class, for the election of the Council, shall do it in the form annexed:—

\* See the Constitution and Regulations.

It is proposed by A. B. and seconded by C. D. that E. F. being an Honorary Associate of this Society, of distinguished Learning, and Author of Y. Z. (naming some creditable Work or Works of Literature) shall be elected as an Associate of the First Class, on the Royal Foundation, (or on the Foundation of the Society, as the case may be.) The said E. F. is recommended as such Associate by A. B., C. D., Y. Z.

Such motion having been carried in the Council, notice of it shall be immediately given by the Secretary to all Members of the Council not present at that Meeting; and a day shall be appointed for the election of such Associate, at the distance of one Calendar Month, at least, from the day of his nomination; and notice of such Election shall be given to every Member of the Council by the Secretary, fourteen days, at least, before it takes place.

2.—The Election of Associates of the First Class shall be by Ballot.

3.—No person shall be proposed as an Associate of the Society, either Honorary, or of the First Class, who has not previously signified his wish to accept such Associateship, if elected to it.

4.—All Proposals of Associates of the First Class shall take place at the first Meeting of the Council in March, in each year respectively.



*5.—Form of Obligation, to be subscribed by an Associate of the First Class.*

I, the undersigned, being elected an Associate of the First Class, of the Royal Society of Literature, (on the Royal Foundation, or on the Foundation of the Society, as the case may be,) do hereby promise, that I will be governed by the Regulations of the said Society, as they are now formed, or as they may hereafter be altered, amended, or enlarged; and that I will endeavour to advance the objects of the said Society.

And in compliance with the Constitution of the said Society, I do hereby choose  
as the branch of Literature on which I will communicate with the said Society.

#### HONORARY ASSOCIATES.

1.—Any Member of the Council wishing to propose an Honorary Associate for election, shall do it in the form annexed:—

It is proposed by A. B. and seconded by C. D. that E. F. being a person eminent for the pursuit of Literature, shall be elected an Honorary Associate of the R. S. L. The said E. F. is recommended as an Honorary Associate, by A. B., C. D., Y. Z.

Such motion being carried by a majority of the Council present, shall be signified by the Secretary to every

Member of the Council, together with the day appointed for the election of such Honorary Associate, which shall be at the distance of fourteen days, at least, from the time of the original Motion—one Meeting of the Council, at least, having been holden in that interval.

2.—The election of Honorary Associates shall be by Ballot.

3.—*Form of Obligation, to be subscribed by an Honorary Associate.*

I, the undersigned, being elected an Honorary Associate of the R. S. L., do hereby promise, that I will be governed by the Regulations of the said Society, as they are now formed, or as they may be hereafter altered, amended, or enlarged; and that I will endeavour to advance the objects of the said Society.

Witness my hand this                      day of

#### HONORARY MEMBERS.

1.—The nomination and election of Honorary Members of the Society shall be precisely the same, in all points; as the Nomination and Election of Honorary Associates.

2.—The number of Honorary Members shall be limited to Twenty-Four, one half, at least, of whom shall be Foreigners.

## ADJUDICATION OF MEDALS.

1.—Whenever a motion shall be made, seconded, and agreed to by the Council, for adjudging a Royal Medal to any Individual for a literary Work, or Works of eminent merit, or for important discoveries in Literature, the names of such Work or Works, or an account of such important discoveries, on which the Motion is founded, shall be laid by the mover on the table of the Council, on the day the motion is made: a further day shall be fixed for the Adjudication of such Medal, at the distance of one Calendar Month, at least, from the passing of such motion: notice shall be given to each Member of the Council, fourteen days at least before the day so fixed, of the Meeting of the Council for that purpose: and the Adjudication shall be by ballot.

## COUNCIL.

1.—No Member of the Council shall either be proposed, or elected, or continue to be, an Associate of the First Class, an Honorary Associate, or an Honorary Member.

2.—At all Meetings of the Council, the Chair shall be taken as soon as a quorum is assembled, after the hour fixed for assembling.

3.—Meetings of the Council shall always be continued by adjournment.

4.—All Officers of the Society and other Members of the Council shall be elected from the Fellows.

### TREASURER.

1.—No Money belonging to the Society shall be drawn out of the hands of the Treasurer, but in pursuance of a vote of the Council.

### LIBRARY.

1.—Whenever it shall be the wish of any Member of the Society, to read any Books, Manuscripts, or Papers, belonging to the Society, he shall make an application for that purpose to the President and Council: of whom leave being obtained, the Librarian shall deliver the said Books, Manuscripts, or Papers, to the Member of the Society having obtained such leave, and shall take his receipt for the same: and the said Books, Manuscripts, or Papers shall be returned to the Librarian within two months.

### ORDINARY MEETINGS.

1.—All Ordinary Meetings of the Society, subsequent to the General Annual Meeting of the 6th of May, 1824, shall take place at three o'clock in the afternoon.

2.—At the Ordinary Meetings of the Society, the Chairman for the time being shall have the privilege of

proposing, for admission, the names of any number of strangers without limitation.

### ORDINARY AND ANNUAL MEETINGS.

1.—All Honorary Members and Associates of the Society shall have the privilege of attending the Ordinary Meetings, and the Annual General Meeting of the Society, but without the right of balloting; and every Member and Associate of the Society shall have the privilege of introducing a stranger at each Ordinary Meeting.

### GENERAL ANNUAL MEETINGS.

1.—A List of the deaths of all Members of the Society, and a list of newly-elected Members, shall be made out annually, previously to each Anniversary Meeting of the Society, and shall be read at such Anniversary.

### ROYAL ENDOWMENT.

1.—On, or before the 25th day of March, in every Year, the Secretary shall prepare a Draught on the Keeper of the King's Privy Purse, for His Majesty's Royal Endowment, which, in pursuance of His Majesty's command, shall be forthwith signed by the President and two Members of the Council; and the Draught for the said Royal Endowment, received by the President from the Keeper



of the King's Privy Purse, shall be forthwith paid to the Treasurer.

### PAPERS.

1.—All Papers presented or recommended to the Council for reading at the Ordinary Meetings of the Society, shall be submitted to a Committee, who shall from time to time report upon the same to the Council :

The said Committee to consist of five Members, to be appointed at the first Meeting of the Council in each Month.

2.—All persons who shall communicate any Papers to the Society, which shall be approved by the Committee of Papers, shall, if they are Members of the Society, have the privilege of reading their own Papers.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS AND COMPOSITIONS.

1.—Stamped Receipts, signed by the Collector, shall be given to all Members, for payments made by them of Composition-money, or Annual Subscriptions.

### COMMITTEES.

1.—Whenever a Committee is appointed for any purpose of the Society, a copy of the Resolution relating to

its appointment shall be sent to each of the Members of the Committee.

### MOTIONS.

1.—All Motions, made either in the Council, or at the Ordinary, or General Meetings of the Society, shall be in writing, and signed by the Mover and Seconder. They shall likewise be numbered, and entered by the Secretary upon the Minutes, in the order in which they are voted.

### LETTERS.

1.—All Letters addressed to the Society, shall be referred to the Treasurer and Secretary; and it shall be left to their discretion, to decide upon those which shall be read to the Society, and those of which the receipt and subject shall only be announced.



